



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.												
10/710,723	07/30/2004	Robert J. Mills	03130.0012.PCUS00	4286												
7590 Harbin King & Klima 500 Ninth Street SE Washington, DC 20003		09/25/2007	<table border="1"><tr><td colspan="2">EXAMINER</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">NGUYEN, NINH H</td></tr><tr><td>ART UNIT</td><td>PAPER NUMBER</td></tr><tr><td>3745</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>MAIL DATE</td><td>DELIVERY MODE</td></tr><tr><td>09/25/2007</td><td>PAPER</td></tr></table>		EXAMINER		NGUYEN, NINH H		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	3745		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	09/25/2007	PAPER
EXAMINER																
NGUYEN, NINH H																
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER															
3745																
MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE															
09/25/2007	PAPER															

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/710,723

Applicant(s)

MILLS ET AL.

Examiner

Ninh H. Nguyen

Art Unit

3745

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 April 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 and 39-70 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 53-70 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) See Continuation Sheet is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) See Continuation Sheet is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 July 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

Continuation of Disposition of Claims:

Claims rejected are 1-3, 4/1-4/3, 5/1-5/3, 8/1-8/3, 9/1-9/3, 10/1-10/3, 11/1-11/3, 12/1-12/3, 13/1-13/3, 39/1-39/3, 40/39/1-40/39/3, 41/39/1-41/39/3, 43-39/1-43/39/3, 44/1-44/3, 45/39/1 - 45/39/3, 46/39/1 - 46/39/3, 47/1-47/3, 48/39/1-48/39/3, 49/39/1-49/39/3, and 52/39/1-52/39/3.

Claims objected to are 6/1-6/3, 7/1-7/3, 14/1-14/3, 15-1-15/3, 16/1-16/3, 17/1-17/3, 42/39/1-42/39/3, 50/39/1-50/39/3, and 51/39/1-51/39/3.

### **DETAILED ACTION**

This Office Action is in response to the Request for Continued Examination dated 26 April 2007.

#### ***Response to Arguments***

1. Applicant's arguments filed 26 April 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that Kuethe does not disclose the limitation of the aggregation stress occurring in the turbofan assembly at a mounting of the respective fan blade to the fan disc is substantially maintained below fifty/twenty/ten megapascals during flight within the aircraft's operating envelope as claimed. Therefore, Kuethe does not anticipate claims 1-3.

The Examiner respectfully disagrees.

Kuethe inherently discloses the method step of including on a flying aircraft a turbofan assembly with fan blades have all the structural limitations of claim 1. The limitation of "so that an aggregate stress occurring in the turbofan assembly at a mounting of the respective fan blade to the fan disc is substantially maintained below fifty/twenty/ten megapascals during flight within the aircraft's operating envelope" is purely intended use and is not given patentable weight. Further more, MPEP 2111.04 states "whereby clause in a method claim is not given weight when it simply expresses the intended result of a process step positively recited". Claims 1-3 each is a single step method claim and the intended result is to have the stresses at a mounting of respective fan blades to be maintained below fifty/twenty/ten megapascals. Therefore, this intended result of limited stress values are not given patentable weight.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-3, 4/1-4/3, 5/1-5/3, 8/1-8/3, 9/1-9/3, 10/1-10/3, 11/1-11/3, 12/1-12/3, 13/1-13/3, 39/1-39/3, 40/39/1-40/39/3, 41/39/1-41/39/3, 43/39/1-43/39/3, 44/39/1-44/39/3, and 52/39/1-52/39/3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kuethe et al. (3,578,264).

Kuethe inherently discloses a method comprising including on a flying aircraft, an aircraft-powering turbofan assembly (Figs. 1-14; col. 1, lines 59-71; col. 2, lines 53-56) comprising multiple fan blades (Fig. 13) mounted on a fan disc and each of the fan blades having a leading edge, a trailing edge, and two side surfaces that comprise a high-pressure side surface and a low-pressure side surface, the turbofan assembly inherently being configured such that a laminar-to-turbulent boundary layer transition occurs on the low-pressure side surface of each of the fan blades during flight, and wherein a plurality of the fan blades are each adapted to further comprise a laminar-to-turbulent boundary layer transition control feature 115 (Fig. 13) at the low-pressure side surface of the respective fan blade, each of the control features initiating and positionally stabilizing a laminar-to-turbulent boundary layer transition to a location upon the respective fan blade between the control feature and the respective fan blades' trailing edge (col. 1, lines 59-66); and wherein an aggregate limited stress occurring in the turbofan assembly at a mounting of the respective fan blade to the fan disc is inherently composed at least partially by fluctuating stresses;

Art Unit: 3745

wherein the blade is inherently operates in non-stall conditions;

wherein the laminar-to-turbulent boundary layer transition control features 115 is located on the low-pressure side surface and having an essentially smooth surface portion located between the leading and trailing edges and the feature comprising a surface deviation constituting a departure from the essentially smooth surface portion (Fig. 13);

wherein the departure from the essentially smooth surface portion is constituted by a reduced-elevation surficial portion, compared to the essentially smooth surface portion (Fig. 9);

wherein the departure from the essentially smooth surface portion is constituted by a raised-elevation surficial portion, compared to the essentially smooth surface portion (Figs. 6-9);

wherein the departure from the essentially smooth surface portion is an elongate strip-shaped area of raised elevation spanning the entire length of the blade (continuous zigzag arrangement 62; col. 5, lines 63-64; Fig. 6), and positioned chordwise between the fan blade leading edge and the fan blade trailing edge.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 47/39/1-47/39/3, 48/39/1-48/39/3, and 49/39/1-49/39/3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuethe.

Art Unit: 3745

Kuethé discloses all the limitations except the departure from the essentially smooth surface portion is not about one-tenth of an inch wide as claimed.

Since the applicant has not disclosed that having the departure from the essentially smooth surface portion being about one-tenth of an inch wide solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose above the fact that the departure from the essentially smooth surface portion affects the boundary layer of the airfoil, and it appears that the method of Kuethé would perform equally well with the dimension as defined and claimed by applicant, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify the method of Kuethé by utilizing the specific dimension as claimed.

6. Claims 45/39/1 - 45/39/3, and 46/39/1 - 46/39/3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuethé.

Kuethé discloses all the limitations except the departure from the essentially smooth surface portion is not greater than three inches long as claimed.

Since the applicant has not disclosed that having the departure from the essentially smooth surface portion being greater than three inches long solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose above the fact that the departure from the essentially smooth surface portion affects the boundary layer of the airfoil, and it appears that the method of Kuethé would perform equally well with the dimension as defined and claimed by applicant, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify the method of Kuethé by utilizing the specific dimension as claimed.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

7. Claims 53-70, due to the method step of determining a range of translation of an unstable transition point between a laminar and a turbulent boundary layer on one of the first side and the second side of at least one of the plurality of unmodified fan blades, are allowed.

8. Claims 6/1-6/3, 7/1-7/3, 14/1-14/3, 15-1-15/3, 16/1-16/3, 17/1-17/3, 42/39/1-42/39/3, 50/39/1-50/39/3, and 51/39/1-51/39/3 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

9. This is a Request for Continuing Examination of applicant's earlier Application No. 10/710,723. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the earlier application and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the earlier application. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action in this case. See MPEP § 706.07(b). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no, however,

Art Unit: 3745

event will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Ninh Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-4823. The examiner can be normally reached on Monday-Friday from 7:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Look, can be reached at (571) 272-4820. The fax number for this group is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, please go to <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov> or contact the Electronic Business center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

**/NINH H. NGUYEN/  
PRIMARY EXAMINER**

Nhn  
September 25, 2007